

THE BUNNIKINS-BUNNIES THE MOON KING

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BY EDITH · B · DAVIDSON



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THE BUNNIKINS-BUNNIES AND THE MOON KING

By

EDITH B. DAVIDSON

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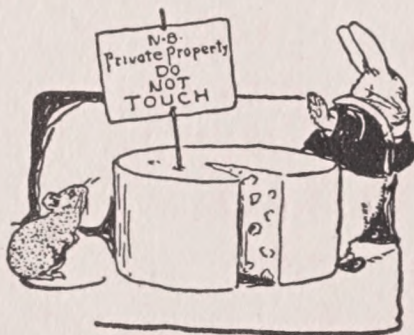
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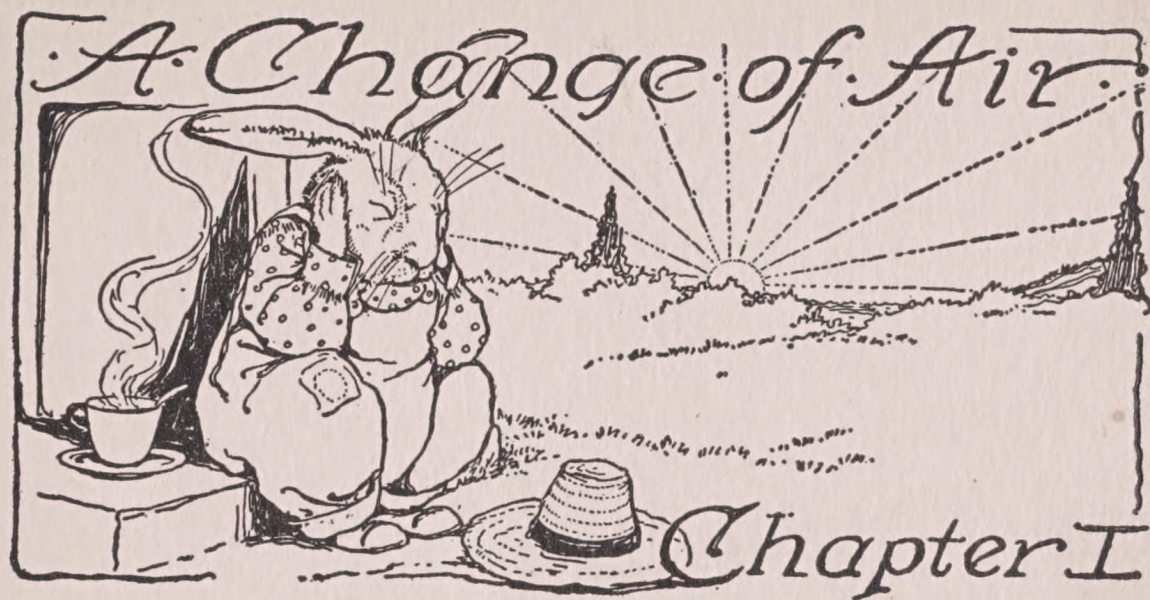
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TO DEAR
BARBARA

WITH THE
COMPLIMENTS
OF HER FRIEND
MR. BUNNIKINS-
BUNNY





One day Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny came home feeling very much out of sorts. He had a headache, a toothache, and the shivery-shivers all over.

Mrs. Bunny gave him some cayenne pepper tea, and then put him to bed well wrapped up in blankets,

and with a hot-water bottle to keep his toe-toes warm. Very funny he looked with his long ears sticking out of his blue-and-white nightcap.

In the afternoon, his friend, Mr. Gray-Squirrel, dropped in to see him,

and said at once:

“What you need is a change of air, and I know just



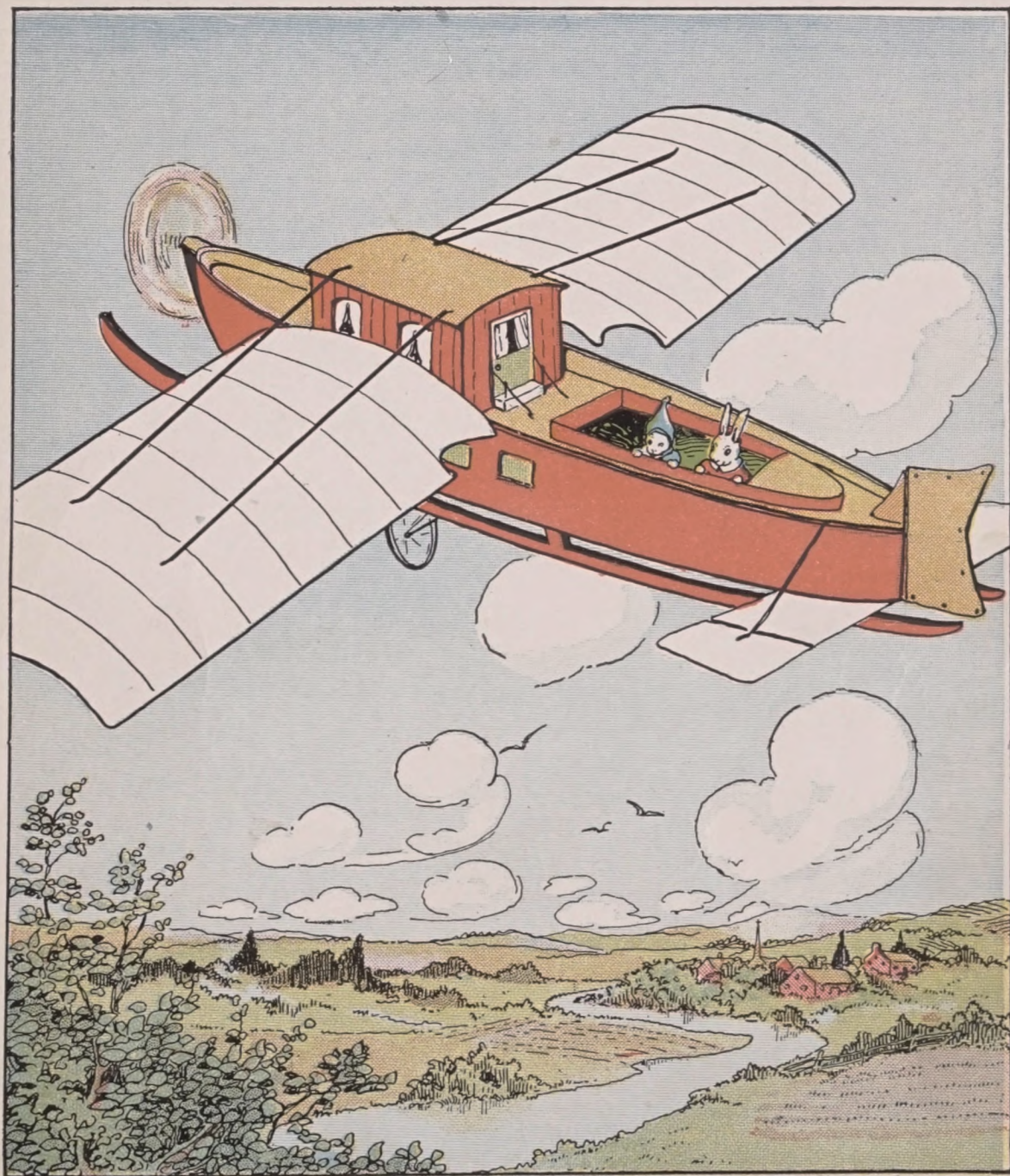
the thing for you to do ; come for a trip to the Moon with me in my new airship. You'll have plenty of fresh air, and not too much heat, unless we happen to fall into the Sun."

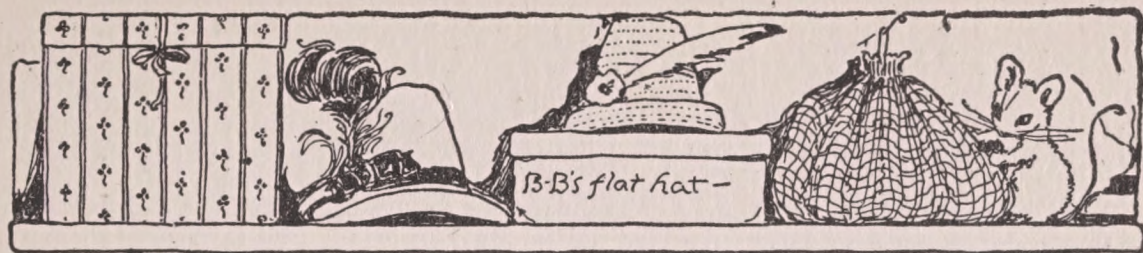
"Oh, no, no!" cried poor Mrs. Bunnikins-Bunny, almost in tears. "I simply cannot let Mr. Bunnikins go sailing in the air. He would surely fall out of the ship, or get lost in the clouds, and I should never see him any more."

But Mr. Bunnikins liked the idea,

and at once set his heart on going. He talked so much about it, that at last Mrs. Bunny consented, if she and the children might go too, so that they could all fall out of the airship together.

As Mr. Gray-Squirrel had told them that the journey would be very cold, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny had a great time buying ulsters and overshoes, caps and mittens. Most of his lovely hats he decided to leave at home, as he was afraid they might be blown away.





By the end of a week, they were all ready to start, Bobtail and Rosamund, Ruddy and Chippie having scarcely slept for nights from excitement.

The airship was most comfortably arranged with nice little cabins in which to eat and sleep, and the sides were so high that no one could possibly fall over the edge.

Mr. Gray-Squirrel had hired Cap-

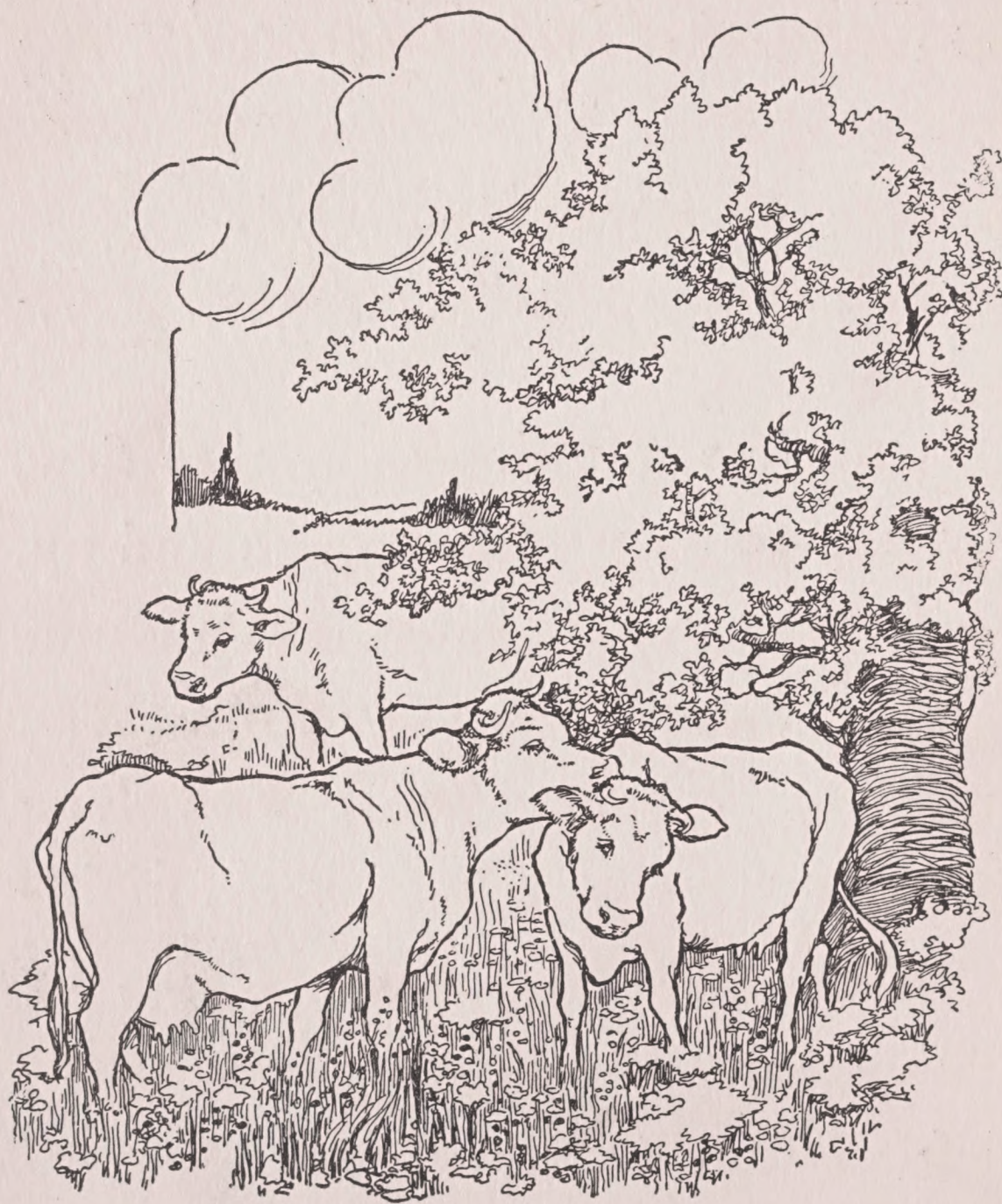
tain Hawk to steer the airship by day, and Admiral Owl to keep a careful lookout at night. The children were rather afraid of Captain Hawk with his bright eyes and sharp beak, but they all loved to talk to old Admiral Owl, although he was always very sleepy when the sun was shining.



Above the Clouds



One fine morning away they flew, circling round and round, up and up, until the earth lay far below. Numbers of strange birds flew about them, and one big gray one, with long feathery ears and a huge beak, frightened little Rosamund dreadfully, by perching on the airship close beside her. Day after day, they sailed past



beautiful stars and planets, until one morning they came to a very large cluster of star islands, which were thickly covered with herds of snow-white cows.

“Those cows belong to the King of the Moon,” said Captain Hawk, “and they give so much milk that the islands are called The Milky Way. We are not far from the Moon now.”

That same day, towards evening, they came to a great round island entirely made of rocks and ice.

“Let’s not stop here,” said Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny with a shiver. “It is so cold that I think the tip of my left ear is frozen.”



“But this is the Island of the Moon,” exclaimed Admiral Owl, blinking his round eyes.

“Oh, how I wish that I had stayed at home,” groaned poor Mr. Bunnikins. “Mrs. Bunny did not want to come anyhow, and now we shall all

freeze into icicles. Oh dear! Oh dear!"

"Never mind," said his kind little wife. "We will wrap up warmly, and perhaps we shall have some sleighing."

Sure enough, when they landed, they found a nice sleigh, drawn by four reindeer, ready to carry them to the hotel. In spite, however, of wearing two ulsters, fur-lined overshoes, a big muff, and a fur cap tied down under his chin, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny's whiskers, which were all you

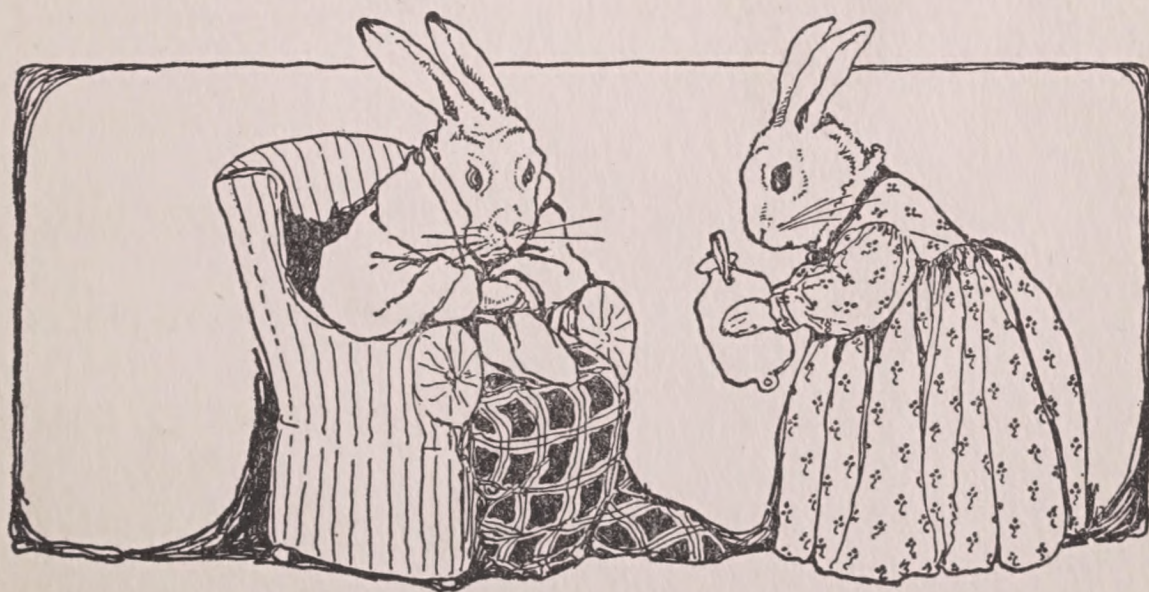
could see of him, fairly shook with the cold.



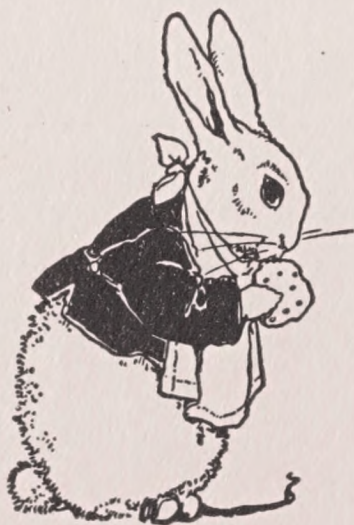
The hotel was all made of ice, so that everybody outside could see inside, and everybody inside could see outside.

It was well heated, and there were warm carpets on the floors, but Mr. Bunnikins would not be comforted. He sat in a big arm-chair close to the fire, with his toe-toes drawn up under him, shivering and groaning.

They had a very queer supper of



dried potato-pie, dried apple dumpling, and dried lettuce and carrot-cake, for as nothing grows on the cold Island of the Moon, everything to eat has to be brought a long distance in airships, and it all dries up on the way.



The Island of the Moon.



Chapter III

As Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny was very anxious to see the Moon King and his beautiful Palace, they all started out the next morning to visit him. At first they were told that they could not see the King, as he slept all day and was very busy all night, but finally they were invited to come to the Palace that evening, at eight o'clock.

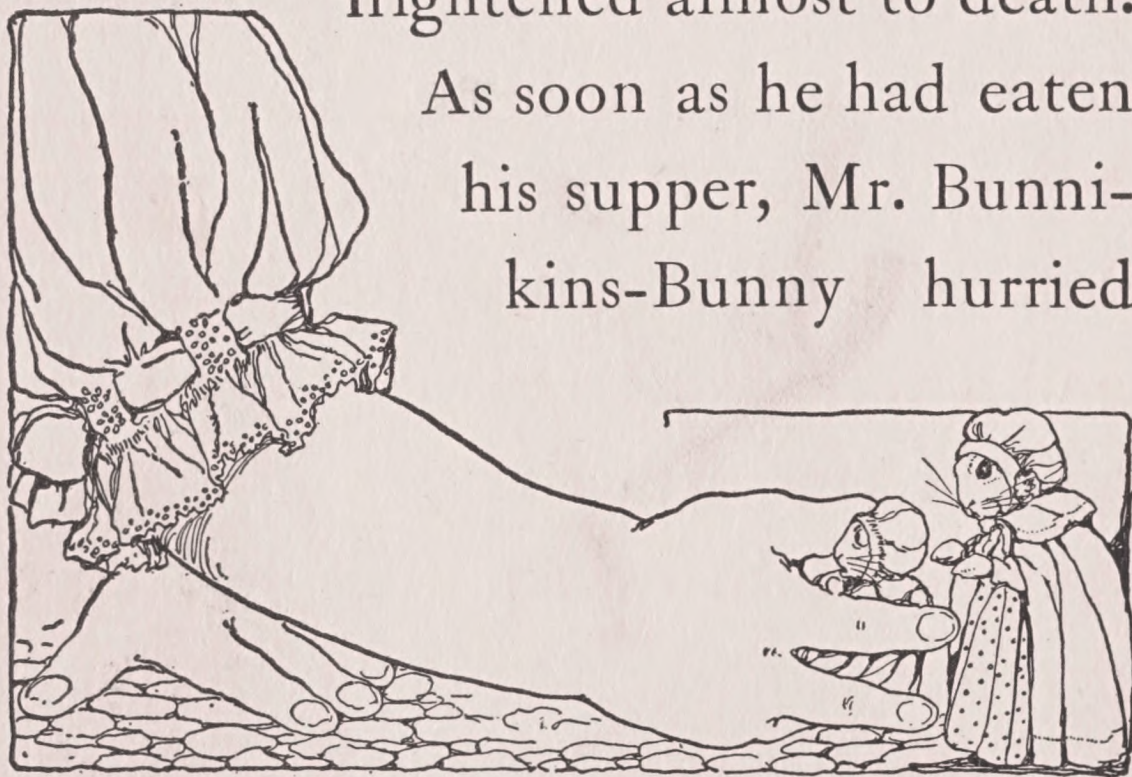


They spent the rest of the day sleighing and seeing the island. The houses were all made of ice, and there were no trees, no flowers, not even a blade of grass. The people were so huge that they terrified the children, and Rosamund kept tight hold of her father's paw.

No Bunnies or Squirrels had ever been seen in the Moon before, and the people admired them very much. One little giant girl cried tears as big as dollars, because she could not keep Rosamund for a plaything, and when

she picked her up in her big hands to
pet her, the poor little bunny was
frightened almost to death.

As soon as he had eaten
his supper, Mr. Bunni-
kins-Bunny hurried



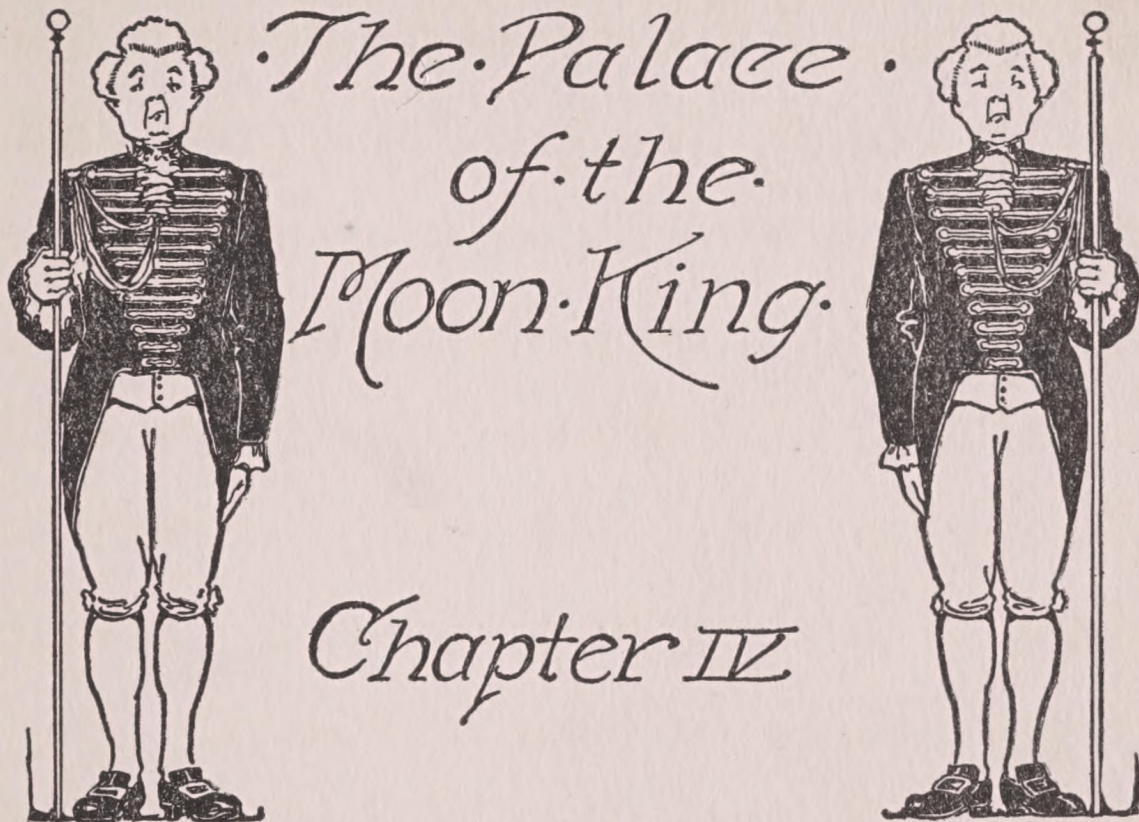
off to dress for the Moon King's
Party. He tried one thing and then
another, until poor Mrs. Bunnikins

was quite tired out trying to help him, and thought he never would be ready in time. At last he decided to wear a beautiful blue velvet suit embroidered in gold, and a very fine green and white hat all trimmed with ostrich



feathers. To keep himself warm, he had a velvet cape lined with fur, and, as a finishing touch, he wore a little gold sword. Mrs. Bunnikins advised him not to, as she was afraid it would be in his way, but Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny insisted that a sword was the proper thing to wear at Court.

Bobtail and Ruddy Squirrel had tied bright red bows on themselves wherever they could find a place, and Rosamund shouted with laughter whenever she looked at them.



The Palace was made entirely of blocks of ice most beautifully carved, the walls being lined with silk, so that nobody could look in. It was brilliantly lighted, and

on each of the broad steps stood a giant soldier, in scarlet and gold uniform.

Two big footmen led the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels through one grand room after another, until they came to a great silver door, on which one of the footmen knocked twice with a silver wand. As the door slowly opened, the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels were so dazzled by the flood of light, that for a moment they all covered their faces with their paws.



Then they looked up and saw the most wonderful room.

It was made of purest white ice, the floors being covered with great white rugs, and the walls with silvery silk. The furniture was of ivory inlaid with silver, and in every corner stood a tall silver vase full of moon flowers, which perfumed the air.

At one end of the great room was a silver throne, on which was seated a gigantic figure clad in a misty white garment, from which the silvery moonbeams streamed out in every direction,



so that the whole room was filled with a shimmering light.

In front of the King was a great round window through which he was intently gazing. His head was quite bald, his cheeks were fat, he had a big mouth, and his eyes were very large and round. As he turned with a pleasant smile to greet the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels, they were very much astonished to recognize the Man in the Moon, whom they had so often seen, sitting high up in the sky.

“Draw the cloud curtain,” he said to one of the footmen, who at once pulled a heavy gray curtain across the great window. Then in a very gentle voice for such a huge being, he added: “Come forward my little people, I am very glad to see you.”

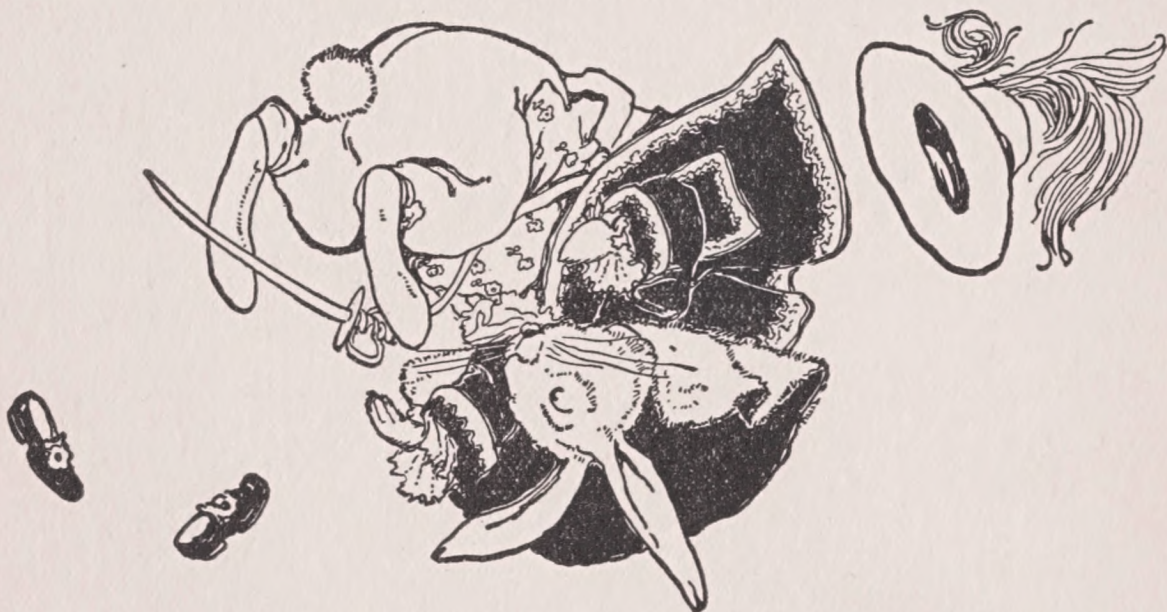


The King of the Moon.



As they came forward Mr. Gray-Squirrel made a polite bow, and Mrs. Bunny and Mrs. Squirrel made nice little courtesies, but poor Mr. Bunni-kins-Bunny, in the middle of a most elegant bow, got his legs so twisted up with his sword, that he turned a

complete somersault right into the
Moon King's lap!



“Never mind,” said the King, as he kindly helped him to his feet, “accidents *will* happen. Have a piece of cheese?”

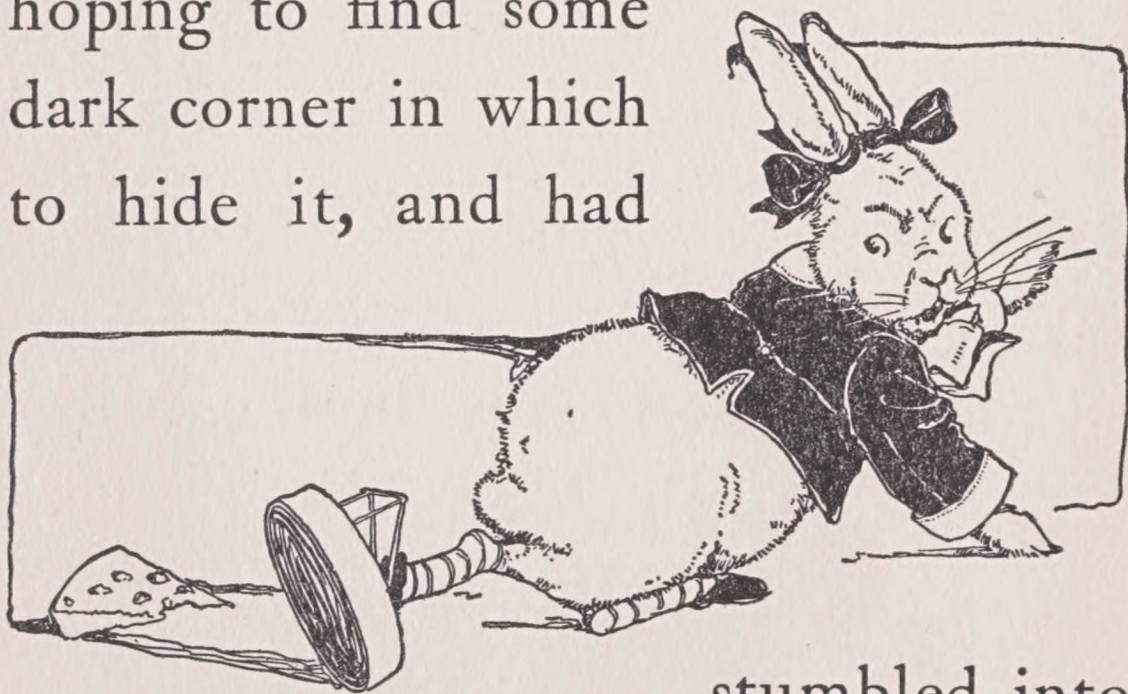
On the broad arm of the King's throne was a plate full of green cheese, of which he took a large piece himself, after offering it to the Bunnies and the Squirrels.

“Do you make your own cheese?” asked Mrs. Bunnikins-Bunny, as she tasted it.

“It is made for me in the Milky Way,” replied the Moon King. “No cows have been allowed in the Moon, since a very rude one jumped right over my head many years ago.”

Just then there was a loud squeal

of terror from the other end of the room. Bobtail had found the queer cheese so horrid, that he simply *could not* eat it. He had wandered off, hoping to find some dark corner in which to hide it, and had



stumbled into a mouse trap, and been caught by the leg.

“ Dear! Dear!” said the King, as they all ran to help poor Bobtail. “ I am so sorry, but you see mice like cheese almost as much as I do, and so I have to set traps everywhere. Now you shall have a peep from my Look-Out-Window,” he continued, taking Bobtail by the paw.

Far, far below they could see the great round earth looking like a little ball, but it made them all so dizzy, that they did not look very long.

“ Do you never get sleepy? ” asked Mrs. Gray-Squirrel.

“Not very often,” answered the Moon King. “There are times when I can watch with one eye, and then I have taught the other eye to go to sleep.”

“I thought you had a dog?” said Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny.

“I did have a very fine yellow dog, but alas, I lost him long ago,” and the King, with a sigh, wiped away a tear.



“His name was Ebenezer, but we called him Sneezer for short, because

he was so fond of mouse patties flavored with pepper, which made him sneeze. He was always chasing cats. One day

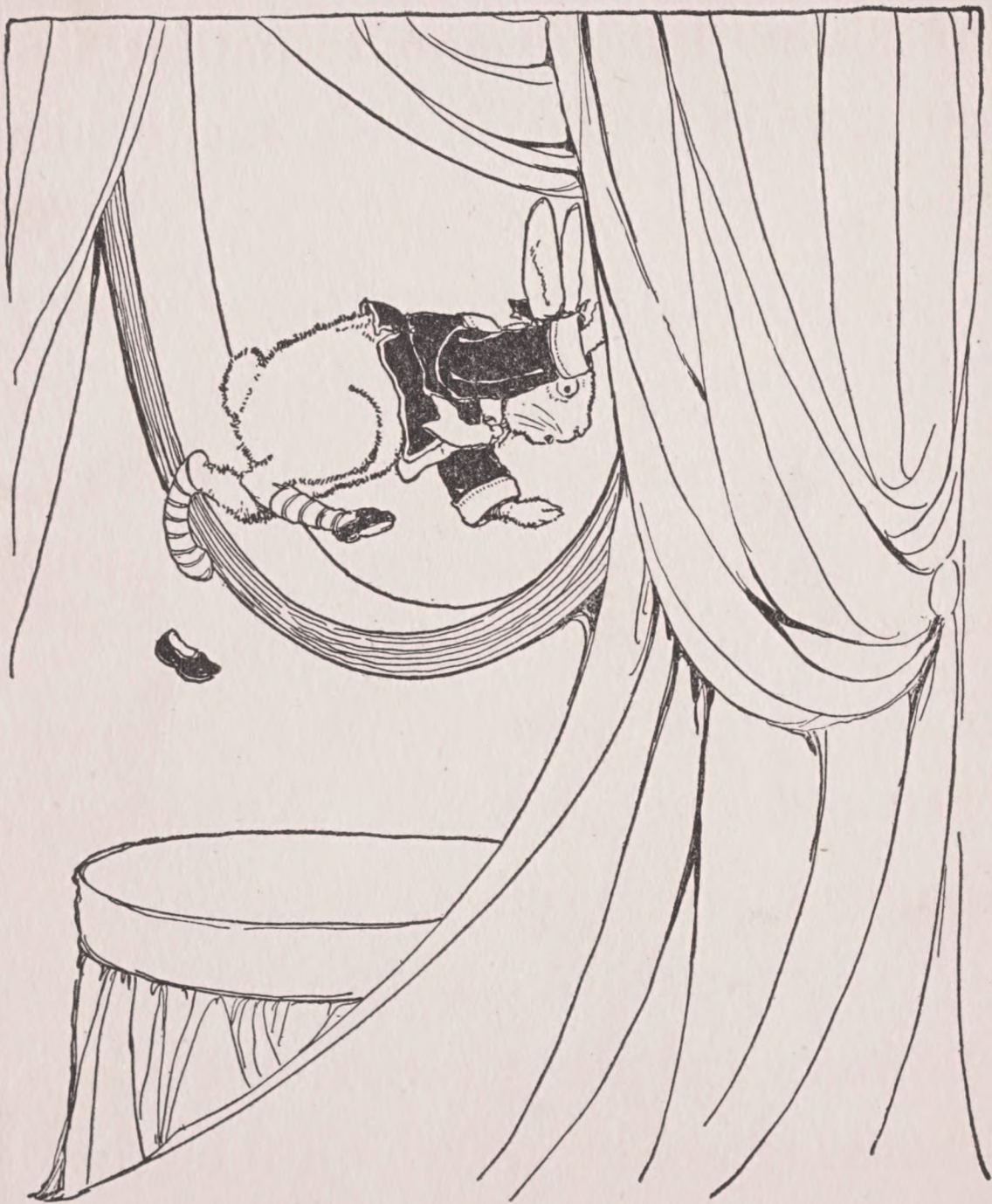


he heard one miaow, and jumping

on the ledge of my Great Window, he slipped and fell out, I don't know where.



“Since then, however, so many yellow dogs have been seen on the Island



of Sirius, that it is now called the Dog Star, and I believe that Sneezer landed there.”

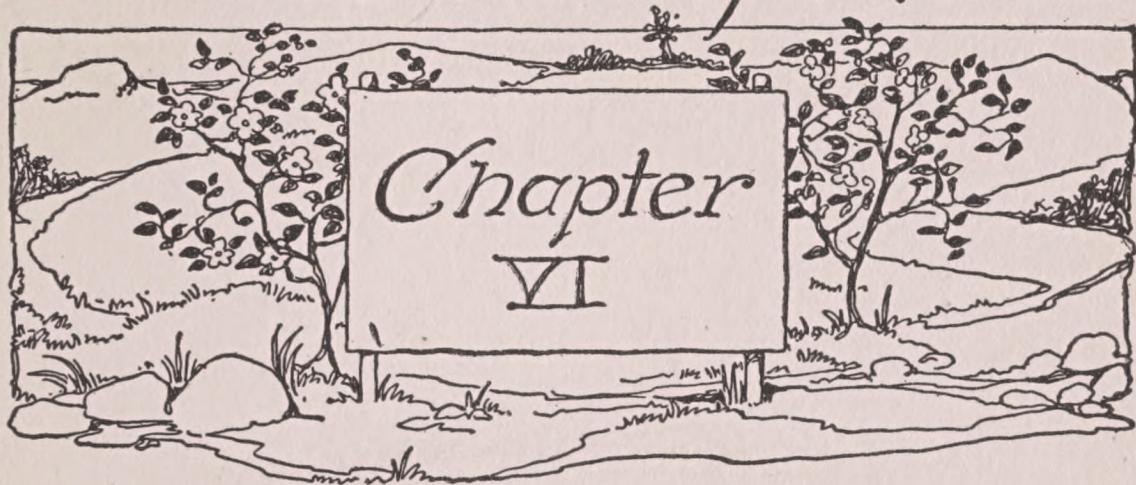
While the King had been talking, the children had crept behind the cloud curtain to try and see the Dog Star. Bobtail had leaned out so far that he lost his balance, and would have surely gone to join Sneezer, had not one of the King's footmen grabbed him by his short tail.

As it was now late, the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels, after thanking the King for his kindness,

said good-by, and the cloud curtain being drawn back, the King of the Moon gazed down once more upon the sleeping earth.



The Island of Mars.



Early next morning, as soon as the sun had risen and the King of the Moon had gone to bed, the Bunni-kins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels went on board the airship, and sailed off toward the Island of Mars. The children begged Captain Hawk to stop at the Dog Star and see



Sneezer, but neither Mr. Bunnikins nor Mr. Gray-Squirrel was willing to, as they were both very much afraid of dogs.

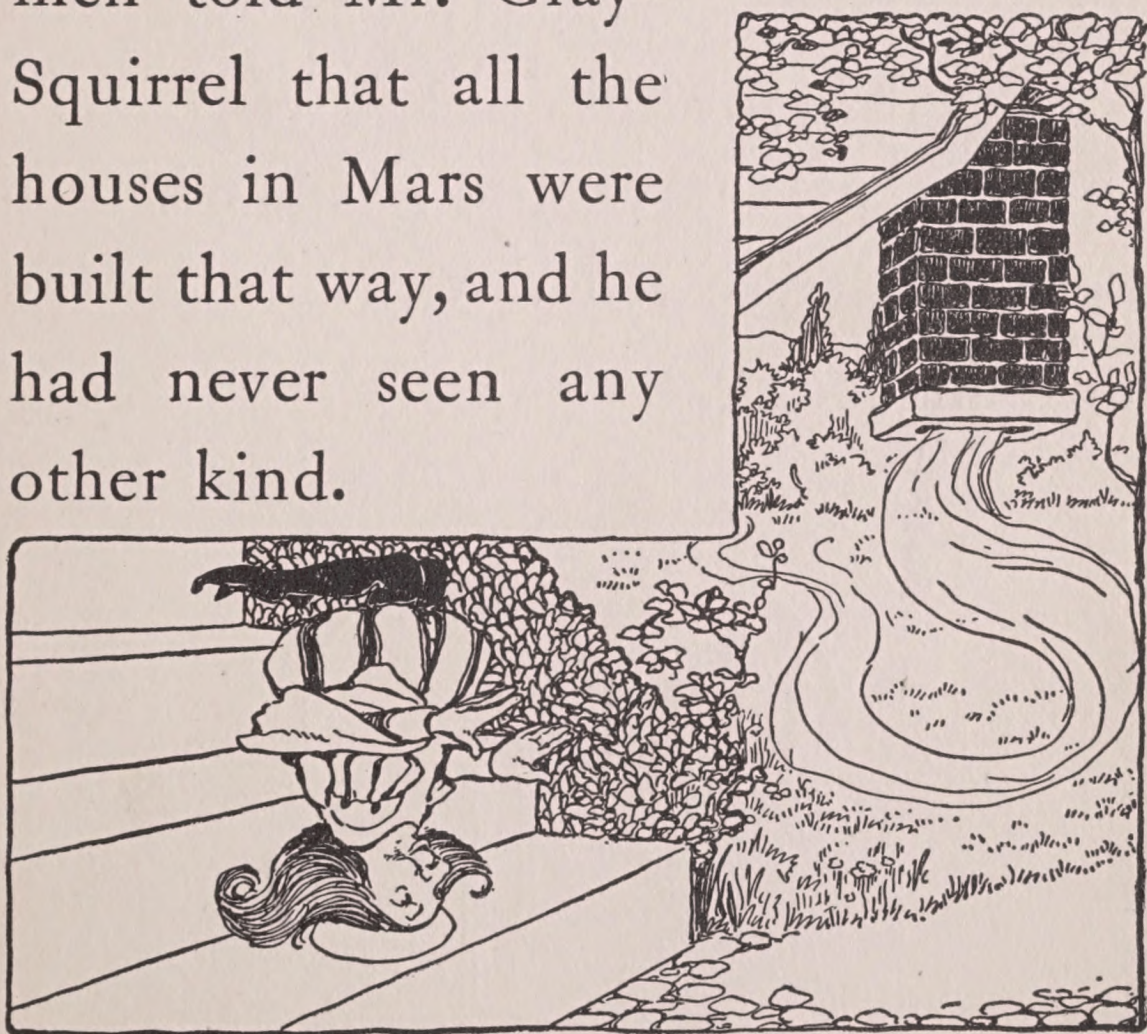
After several days of cloud fogs and contrary winds, they arrived at the great Island of Mars. As they came near the shore, they were astonished to see two squatty little men walking about on their heads with their heels in the air. No sooner had Bobtail and Ruddy Squirrel landed, than they scampered off to look at the funny men. When they

came near them, however, they were walking on their feet. They told Bobtail that they could walk as easily on one end as the other, and so by changing they never were tired.

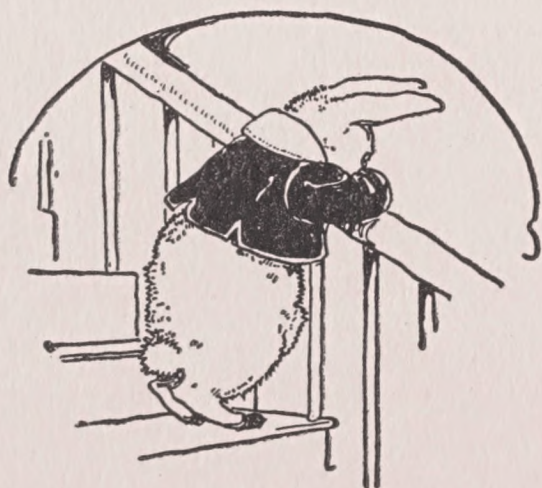
When Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny asked the way to the nearest town, the little men offered to go with them, as it was not far off. The village looked very pretty as they approached, surrounded by fruit trees and gardens of flowers, but the houses seemed most peculiar. The doors were at the top of the houses, the chimneys



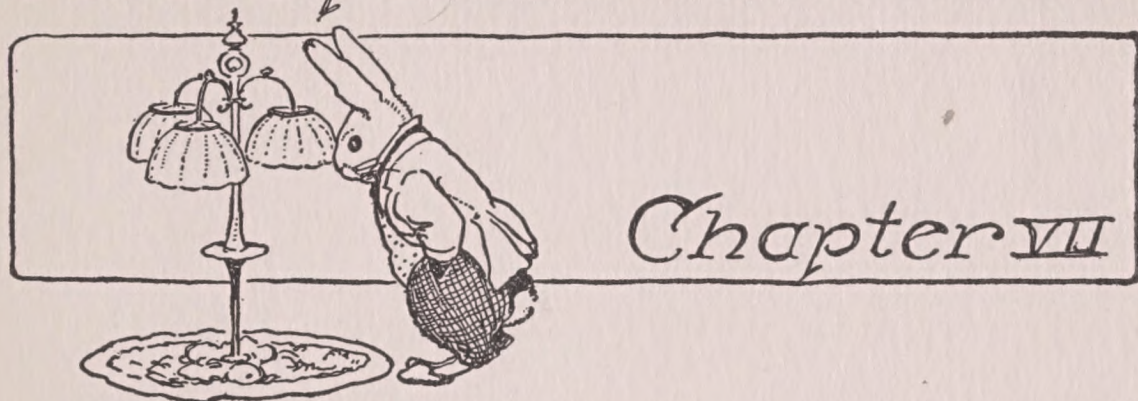
smoked close to the ground, and the people went into their homes by an outside staircase. One of the little men told Mr. Gray-Squirrel that all the houses in Mars were built that way, and he had never seen any other kind.



When they arrived at the hotel, they were escorted to the front door by the landlord, who hopped up the outside staircase before them on his head. They went into a big hall at the top of the house, from which a broad staircase led downstairs to the upstairs rooms.



The Upside-Down House



Chapter VII

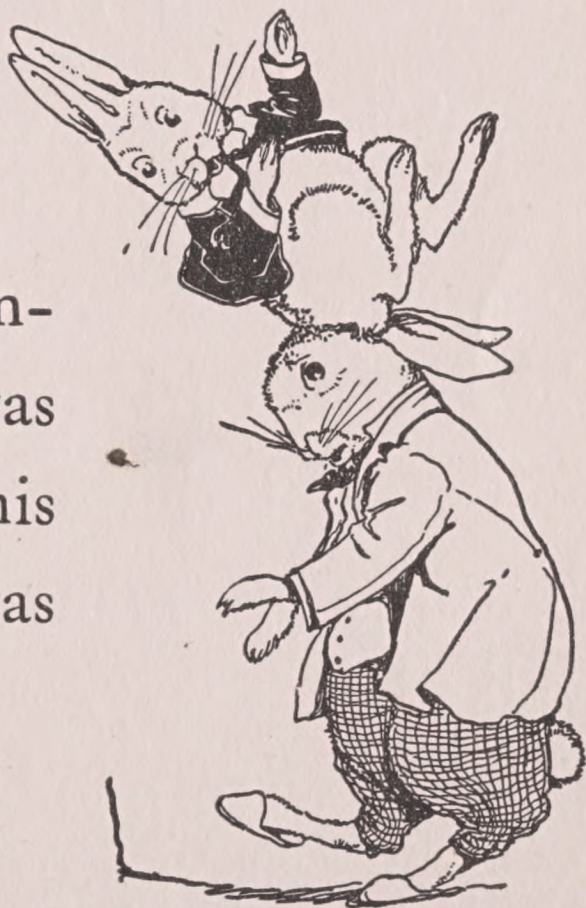
When the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels saw their bedrooms, they did not know what to do. The chandeliers stood up from the floors, and in the corners were little stairways leading up to the ceilings on which all the furniture was nicely arranged.

Mrs. Bunny wondered how she should ever keep the children from falling out of bed, while Mr. Bunni-kins-Bunny sat down on a corner of the chandelier, and held his bewildered head between his front paws.

“If we stay here long,” said he, “I shall go crazy, and you will have to keep me in a cage.”

Meanwhile, the children were racing up and down the little stairways and trying the beds and chairs on the ceiling. It was quite easy for Ruddy and Chippy Gray-Squirrel to hang

on, but it was very difficult for Bobtail and Rosamund Bunny, and it ended by Bobtail's suddenly falling right on top of his father, who thought that the furniture was coming down, and was scared out of his wits. Bobtail was well scolded, and after that he and Rosamund were forbidden to climb on the ceiling.



The landlord was quite hurt that they did not like his fine rooms, but to please them, he at last promised to put some beds on *his ceiling*, which they called a floor.

After a good dinner, they went out to walk, and everywhere they saw the most curious sights. All the houses and shops were built upside down, and many of the people walked that way.

They were good-natured, fat little dwarfs, with big heads, long black hair, and small, bright eyes. They

wore very gay clothes,—red, blue, and yellow being their favorite colors,—and Mr. Bunnikins's fine hat and beautiful clothes were immensely admired. In fact the people crowded so closely about the Gray-Squirrels and the Bunnikins-Bunnies and admired them so much, that at last Mr. Bunnikins became frightened, and hurried them all back to the hotel.







In the middle of the night, Mr. Gray-Squirrel woke up to find Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny in his blue-and-white nightcap, standing by his bedside, with a lighted candle in his paw.

“What is the matter?” asked Mr. Gray-Squirrel, sitting up in bed.

“Oh dear me!” groaned poor Mr.

Bunnikins-Bunny, "I can't go to sleep, for every time that I do, I dream that the furniture is falling off the ceiling, or that I am walking on my head. Would you be willing to leave this awful place before breakfast? "

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Gray-Squirrel; "I am ready to go whenever you are."

"Besides," continued Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, "I think that the people here are becoming much too fond of us, and if we stay any longer, they

may not let us go away at all. I am sure that I don't wish to spend the rest of my life walking on my head in an upside-down house."

They waked up Mrs. Bunny, Mrs.



Gray-Squirrel, and the children as soon as it was light, and creeping



quietly up the big staircase, they stole out of the house.

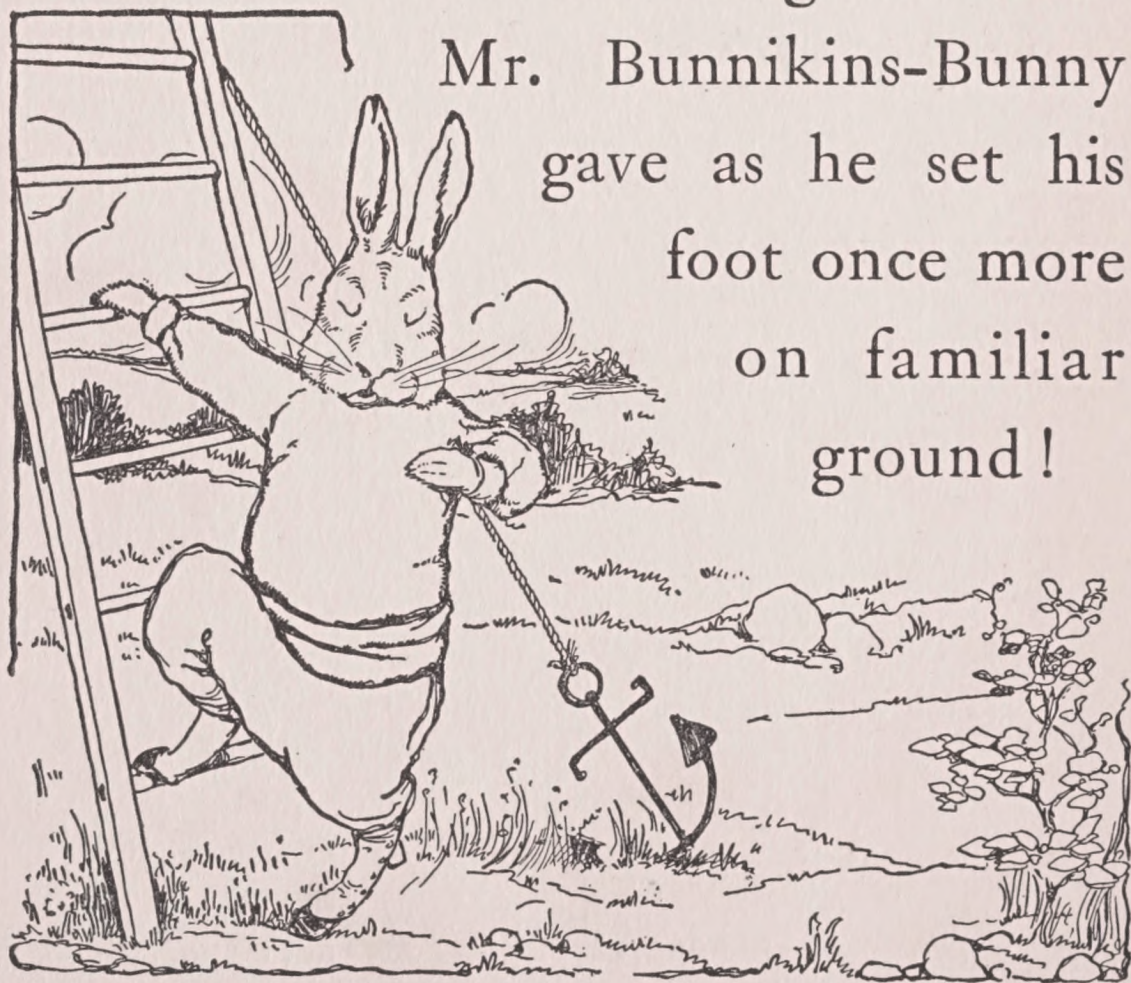
At each street corner, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny had a fresh scare, but they met no one, and before the people were stirring in the village, they were safely on board the airship.

“If you don’t mind, I would rather not stop at any more islands,” said Mr. Bunnikins. “In fact, I think I should like to go home.”

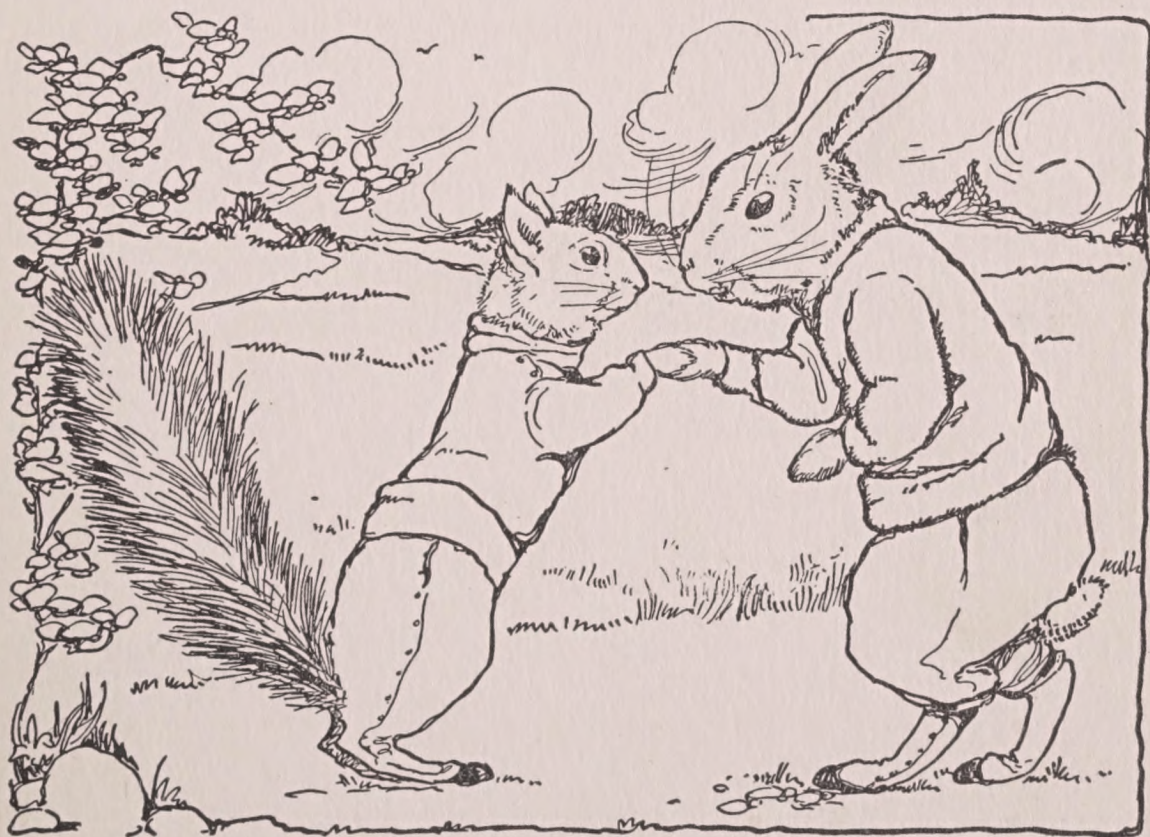
Mr. Gray-Squirrel was quite willing, so down they went, circling

round and round, lower and lower,
until at the end of the second day
they were close to the Earth.

What a sigh of relief
Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny
gave as he set his
foot once more
on familiar
ground!



As they said good-by, he thanked Mr. Gray-Squirrel warmly, and assured him that he had had a most wonderful trip. But as they walked towards home, he said to Mrs. Bunni-



kins : “ Well, my dear, I have always thought that I should like to be a bird and fly in the air ; but now, I am quite contented to be myself, and stay on the good old solid Earth ! ”



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